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Philippine Resources and the United States

By D. R. WILLIAMS

Author of "The United States and the Philippines," for twenty years resident in the Islands, and formerly Secretary of the Philippine Commission.

The need and struggle for tropical food products and raw materials have everywhere become increasingly desperate, and the United States is paying steadily increasing tribute to those governments whose foresight has given them control of the sources of supply.

Of the tropical domains of the earth 40.38 per cent, with area of 8,258,790 square miles, are independent; 59.00 per cent, with area of 12,167,970 square miles, are owned or administered by European powers, while but 0.62 per cent, or 125,992 square miles (including the Philippines), are owned by the United States.

On the other hand, the United States is by far the greatest consumer of tropical products, its imports from tropical countries now aggregating over \$2,000,000,000 annually—for practically all of which we are dependent upon the good will and tariff regulations of trade competitors. As population increases, the need and value of these products will steadily grow—with a corresponding tendency by producing nations to restrict their export—thus creating a situation whose possible disastrous consequences to our people and industries are yet scarcely realized. In this connection Dr. E. B. Ball of the U. S. Department of Agriculture recently stated:

U. S. Imports Food

Statisticians have estimated that our population at the close of this century will be more than 220,000,000, and have placed the probable time in which we will begin to import the staple foods at from 15 to 30 years. The real situation is, however, much more critical than these estimates would indicate. The United States is today a food importing nation, measured in dollars—that is, we import more sugar, tea, coffee, spices, nuts and tropical fruits than we export of wheat and meat.

Professor Pearl of Johns Hopkins University estimates that before the end of the century one-half the calories required to sustain the people of the United States will have to be imported, and says:

We are becoming more and more dependent upon the great undeveloped areas in tropical countries for our very existence.

Lumber

The acute situation we are approaching as to food products applies with even greater force to the imminent shortage of our timber supplies. At the National Conference on the Utilization of Forestry Products, held at Washington, D. C., November 19 and 20, 1924, Major George P. Ahern, for 15 years Director of Forestry in the Philippines, and now in charge of the Forestry Division of the Tropical Plant Research Foundation, stated:

As the forests of the United States rapidly disappear, as inadequate efforts are made to close the gap between consumption and adequate annual growth, a long period of scarcity in our local wood supply becomes inevitable and not

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Politics in the Philippines

By JOHN W. HAUSSELMANN

Now that the Philippine elections are over, the usual large number of protests from defeated candidates are being lodged with the Governor General. Late reports from Manila are to the effect that numerous fraud charges have been launched in all parts of the Islands since the elections on the second of June.

Election frauds are altogether too common in some American municipalities; but in the Philippines, apparently, fraud might almost be said to be the essence of every election.

Popular suffrage has been in existence in the Philippines since 1907, when the first Philippine Assembly was elected, yet the purity of the ballot has not as yet shown any appreciable improvement. If anything, the political bosses who control the contending parties have become more expert and more ingenious in their schemes for usurping the popular will than ever before. In addition to old tricks, such as deliberately throwing ballots under the table, rough mutilations of ballots, the voting of dead men, and the like, during the last election a boat carrying ballots, most of which were unfavorable to the local boss, was "accidentally wrecked," resulting in the loss of the ballots and returns.

Philippine courts have been swamped with election cases ever since popular suffrage was introduced in the Archipelago. Often the calendars are so crowded that by the time a decision is rendered, the term of a wrongfully seated official has almost expired. This



happened in the case of the governor of Laguna province, near Manila, where General Cailles, a Democrata candidate, was kept out of office almost a full term in a recent election, while his opponent, who on the face of the returns had a slight majority but who had really lost, exercised the full privileges, emoluments and prerogatives of the office.

American governors general have made several attempts to change the election laws so as to make the elections proof against fraud, but thus far the effort has been without success. It is now admitted on all sides, that the present Philippine election law, considered a model when it was first enacted a few years ago, is not much more effective than its predecessors. The use of voting machines designed by a Filipino just returned from the United States, is now being advocated.

Get Vote Out

A remarkable fact about Philippine elections is the very high percentage of registered voters who actually cast their ballots, this percentage being in the neighborhood of 80 as compared with about 50 in the United States. This is not as encouraging at it seems, but is due to the strong personal control exercised by the political leaders over the individual voters in each district. These leaders see to it that virtually every one of their respective followers goes to the polls.

Extraordinary precaution was taken during the last election to guard against disorders, and on the whole the election was peaceful. However, half a dozen political armed encounters took place, resulting in the loss of a few lives.

Issues Personal

There were no divergent issues of any sort in the June 2, 1925, election. Both contending parties expressed themselves in favor of independence, pro forma; but neither had a constructive economic or political program. The contest in every instance was a test of personal influence on the part of the candidates upon the individual voter. Often this influence was more than merely moral. Material considerations are never overlooked by candidates in Philippine elections.

Thus democratic self-government is finding it difficult to obtain a proper development among a population which for centuries knew nothing but autocratic control, both socially and politically. When our nation introduced the forms of democratic rule in the Philippines in 1907, it conferred upon the population a political system for which the people were not prepared. Time has shown that the adaptation of the populace to this new system, which has had its origin and flowering in Anglo-Saxon soil, is a slow and discouraging process; although some progress has been made, and the people at least have

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far distant. * * * The years of growing scarcity will accent the forcing of prices upward and thus make marketable more and more of the commoner tropical woods.

In a statement issued by the Tropical Plant Research Foundation in January, 1925, it is said:

The hardwood lumber supplies of the United States will be practically exhausted by the year 1945 (20 years) according to the estimates of foresters; and if the wood-using industries of this country are to continue to grow with the population, or even to maintain approximately their present status, they must begin at once to lay plans for securing essential raw materials.

The Philippine Forestry Bureau estimates there are over 60,000 square miles of public forests in the Islands, comprising both soft and hard woods, with almost unlimited quantities of minor forest products, such as rattan, dye-woods, tan-barks, paper-pulp, gums, resins, fiber-plants, etc. The stand of timber is conservatively estimated at two hundred thousand million board feet, and is believed to be worth in Government revenue almost \$400,000,000—this exclusive of the market value of the timber. These forests, if properly utilized, furnish a tremendous reservoir from which to replenish our fast diminishing home supply.

Sugar

Lands suitable for sugar growing in Cuba and Hawaii are now almost completely taken up, while the sugar producing area of the United States is limited. There is suitable and available land in the Philippines to produce a larger sugar tonnage than Cuba and

a superficial acquaintance with the machinery of popular government.

A Farce

Under present conditions popular suffrage in the Philippines is more or less of a farce. It has been impossible thus far to imbue the political leaders, and much less the ignorant masses, with the spirit of fair play and political discipline that are necessary for a proper working out of democratic self-rule. Oriental influences, congenital and environmental, are still paramount, and it will probably take many years to counteract them effectively.

Still Orientals

Under American sovereignty, the Philippine Islands have made much

Hawaii combined, thus insuring the American people a domestic and certain source of supply of this most essential product for generations to come.

Hemp and Sisal

The Philippines have a monopoly of hard fiber, known as Manila hemp, and can produce sisal equal to that of Yucatan. The production of both such products can be expanded to meet the needs of the United States for an indefinite period.

Rubber

And so on down the list, including copra and coconut oil, tobacco, rattan, coffee, spices, wood pulp, fruits and nuts, kapok, indigo, rubber and other innumerable products of the tropics.

Americans the God of the Machine

Trade development there has been in the Philippines under American rule, and in no small amount as the figures show, but it has only been a tithe of what was possible, and of what might have been accomplished had investments been encouraged instead of penalized. With rare exceptions, the increase recorded has not been due to large investments, but rather to an all around improvement in public order, methods of cultivation, better transportation, highways and marketing facilities, and the stimulus of free trade with the United States. The God of the Machine, however, has been a comparatively small band of pioneer American business men, who, with dogged persistence, and in the face of every obstacle and disappointment, have hung on, invested their savings in the Islands, and hoped against hope that their countrymen at home would eventually appreciate the situation and take steps to claim their heritage and protect their own.

progress in an economic way. The social standards have been raised through the development of the country's resources, largely because of American enterprise and organizing ability. Socially and politically, at bottom, however, the Islands are still in a primitive stage, and the influences of Occidental civilization have only been very superficial. It is hoped that through the exercise of the prerogatives of democratic government, the people will in the course of time enter into its essential spirit and recognize that rights entail responsibilities. But indications are that this period of transition will be a long one and that it will require much patience and labor on the part of those who represent American sovereignty in the Philippine Territory.

